

Consul General Colombia Barrosse
Remarks at Model United Nations of Naples
Naples, Italy
January 20, 2014

As prepared

- Sono molto lieta e onorata di essere qui oggi, e vorrei ringraziare gli organizzatori, nonché complimentarmi con il Comune di Napoli e la Direzione Scolastica Regionale per l'iniziativa di tenere a Napoli un "Italian Model UN".
- E adesso, poiché ho saputo che il vostro programma si svolge interamente in inglese, continuerò in questa lingua. I come to you today not only as Consul General, but as one of you. Because many years ago – before you were born – maybe even before your parents were born – I also participated in the Model UN.
- I was in High School. The program was at Harvard and I joined because my friends had joined, without really knowing much about what was involved. We were assigned to represent South Yemen and we knew almost nothing about that country's foreign policy. So we began the process of learning about South Yemen and ended up learning more about ourselves!
- Over the next few days, you Model UN delegates – whether your role is as a Minister or an Ambassador or a committee member – will be getting an amazing experience in research, debate, public speaking, writing, negotiating, critical thinking, teamwork and leadership. These are the kind of skills that would make you a great diplomat or a great politician.
- But even more importantly, these are the skills that will make you a committed, responsible global citizen. The kind of citizen who can inform herself about the issue that affect her town, her region, her country, before voting.

- The kind of citizen who relies on science and facts to make up their mind about what is going on rather than to rely on what the media or an interested group might tell you.
- The kind of citizen who understands the world's complexity and his country's place in it. I imagine that you are all aware already of the important contributions that Italy has made together with NATO allies, to world security and stability. In Libya, Afghanistan and now – Syria. And the respect the community of democracies has for your country.
- But if you are not, I am sure the next few days will change that. Because Model UN is the kind of transformative experience that deepens our understanding of the world, that makes it possible for us to be instruments of change.
- And to underscore how powerful responsible citizenship can be, let me remind you about Martin Luther King, a great American whose birthday we celebrate today in the U.S. Like Ghandi before him, Martin Luther King used every one of the skills you will learn during this program, together with courage and with a vision of a world where equal rights are the standard. And what resulted was a change in the course of U.S. history. Of world history.
- Maybe we can't all change the world, but we certainly have a responsibility to try. As Martin Luther King himself put it: "Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in."
- I thank you for your attention and wish you a fantastic experience. You are the future of Italy and of the world and that future looks bright.